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BAPTISM & COMMUNION,

BEING

STRICTURES ON A BOOK

ENTITLED

BAPTISM, THE COVENANT AND THE FAMILY,

By Rev. Philip Wolff,

DELIVERED IN NORDHEIMER'S HALL,

Montreal, March 30th, 1862,

BY

REV. J. H. WALDEN,

Of Massena, N Y.

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REVIEW.

"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."—*Matt.* v. 19.

It is known, to a limited extent, that a book entitled "Baptism, the Covenant and the Family," has been published; first in French, and subsequently in English; translated, with additions, by the author.

This book, as either a literary or religious work, is utterly undeserving of a review. But the importance of a subject, may justify a notice of a very unworthy treatment of it, by an author.

The importance of this subject, the flagrant misrepresentations of a large body of Christians, which this volume contains, and the hope of bringing truth before inquiring minds, induces this review.

Since there is diversity among Christians, every people has a right to be understood. And a correct knowledge of each other's views, will reduce differences to the smallest dimensions, tend to bring articles of belief to the test of the Bible, and promote love and union among believers.

Such a work as Mr. W.'s, presents a temptation to an unchristian spirit, as "like begets like." To have it stated many times, in a small volume, that you hold certain views, that the author ought to have known are as far from your real faith as Mohammedanism or Purgatory is rather a trial. Of the not very clever sarcasm, and not over-refined vituperation of Baptists, with which Mr. W.'s book abounds, we shall not speak, further than to correct a few of its untruths and absurdities, as specimens of the whole. In complying with a request to review this book, we prayer-

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fully considered what answer would best serve the cause of truth. We have carefully read every word of its 158 sections; and find, what we never before saw in any religious book, Protestant or Romanist, that there is not a single section in the whole which does not contain a gross misstatement, or a palpable error. To speak of them all, would require time that might better be devoted to other purposes.

The points of argument in such a work are, of necessity, few. When they are shown to be without foundation, the remainder of the book, being mere human dicta, is justly disregarded. We shall, therefore, treat the subject in a general way.

Our plan will require us to notice—The true method of proof, or "system of evidence"; The importance of the subject; What constitutes baptism; Who are scriptural subjects of baptism; And close communion of which Mr. W. speaks as a logical conclusion, from our practice of immersion exclusively.

I. The true method of proof, or "system of evidence." In Mr. W.'s preface, he says, "he has more than once censured some of the doctrines and arguments usually set up in defence of infant baptism, and has brought forth a *new system of evidence.*" This idea of a "new system" is significant. A religious question is a matter of Divine revelation; therefore a "new system" must be false, or show the old systems to be so. Anything taught by the Bible is to be proved by its chapters and verses. Baptism, being a positive institution, is a duty, only because it is enjoined by Christ. Hence, there can be no proof, but in the words by which it is enjoined and described. There can, therefore, be no system of evidence, but to quote the chapters and verses of the Bible that state it. And as there is no passage in the Bible requiring, or describing, infant baptism, those who practice it must resort to some human system of evidence, which, like everything human, is liable to change. Let it be remembered that the Baptists, on every point of faith and practice, rely solely upon the statements of the Bible. Their one rule is—

"*The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible.*"

Their system, therefore, is as old as the Bible, and can never change, while that book remains the rule of their faith and practice. To meet the entire silence of the Bible on Infant Baptism, Mr. W. says: "We ask you for a special command against baptizing children." This is not new, for we have often been told that "the Bible does not forbid infant baptism." When we are commanded to teach all nations, baptizing them," it is a command not to baptize any, but those who have been previously taught. The statute that prescribes, that every male citizen, twenty-one years of age, with certain other qualifications, may vote in civil elections, does forbid every one under 21 years old to vote. But if the absence of an express prohibition justifies infant sprinkling, so it does the sprinkling of bells and images by the Romanists, the sale of indulgences, and the impositions of purgatory. The Bible does not say, you shall not sprinkle bells and images, you shall not sell indulgences to sin, you shall not pray souls out of purgatory, for so much money. In a matter of revelation, silence is not proof. We must have positive injunction or plain and approved example. But, without one example, or one instance of infant sprinkling, there are Protestant Christians who really suppose they can prove it from the Bible. The same is true of many other errors. *Wherein does the mistake consist?* It is in what *constitutes* Bible proof. No article of faith is a Bible doctrine, THAT CANNOT BE FORMED OF PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE, WITHOUT NOTE OR COMMENT, SO AS TO CONVEY THE EXACT IDEA, AND NO MORE. No intelligent divine would undertake to construct such an article on infant sprinkling. How then do they claim to prove it by the Bible? They quote certain passages, that say nothing about it, and explain them to *mean* it; or to teach some doctrine from which they *infer* it. Explanations may be able and candid, and inferences ever so honest, yet they are mere *human views.*

The best exposition, beyond the simple import of the words, is mere human opinion of the Bible, and not the Bible itself, and must never be made an article of faith. To admit the necessity of human exposition, in order to a correct faith, is virtually saying, that God has not given us all that is necessary to our faith and practice, but hands

us over to the opinions of men. Cannot God speak as plainly as men? Cannot He explain his own meaning as well as we can? This is the main question between Papists and Protestants—the sufficiency of the Bible as a rule of faith and practice, without the authoritative exposition of any man, or any Church! This is the only difference between Baptists and Pedobaptists. Both agree that there is no positive precept for, or undeniable example, of infant sprinkling, in the Bible. The Pedobaptist says, it is right to infer it from other things. The Baptist says, no man has a right to make an article of faith out of a human inference. We must have a positive "Thus saith the Lord."

The only correct system of evidence, then, is to quote from the Bible, the chapters and verses, that plainly state the point we would prove. But is it not the province of the ministry, to explain as well as apply and enforce the Scriptures? Most certainly. There are many difficult and figurative passages, from which great truths may be evolved, by judicious exposition. But our danger lies in fanciful interpretations. We need a rule that shall guard us against erroneous exposition. Without a *perfect* rule, we may run into any description of error. We here give such a rule: NEVER EXPLAIN A DOUBTFUL PASSAGE TO TEACH A DOCTRINE NOT POSITIVELY STATED IN OTHER PASSAGES THAT NEED NO EXPLANATION. This rule will enable any one acquainted with the Bible, or who possesses a good concordance, to settle any positive religious duty in a very short time, and with absolute certainty.

But what shall we do when passages of Scripture conflict with each other? How shall we determine the balance of proofs? There are no such passages. What the Bible says in one place, it does not contradict in another. In applying this, we shall see that Baptism is the immersion of a credible believer, and nothing else. But are there not two sides to this question? Most certainly.—The Human and The Divine. There may be many sides to any religious question. One Divine side—that is truth. Many human sides—all of which are errors.

II. The importance of Baptism. Its importance is almost universally acknowledged. We find it prominent in

the confessions of faith and practices of most churches. It is strongly recognized in the New Testament. John preached it prominently, and it was so important a part of his mission, that he was called, by inspiration, John the Baptist. Jesus, by his disciples, administered it early and numerously. It is the second duty in the Great Commission. The Apostles administered it at once to all believers. On the day of Pentecost it was preached in the first sermon, and also to the Eunuch in his chariot. Paul makes it a prominent argument on the resurrection, 1 Cor. 15, and from it draws a strong appeal for a holy life, Rom. 6. Since it holds so prominent a place in the Word of God, let no one neglect to follow his convictions, under the plea that it is a small matter. But why is it important? As water cannot wash away sin, the simple act of baptism is of no importance but from the principles it involves. Respecting the grounds of this importance, there are two views. One supposes grace imparted by it, or a certain mysterious spiritual benefit to accompany it. The other is, that baptism is the entrance upon a public profession of the religion of Christ, by a simple but significant act of obedience. expressive of personal faith. This, without any modification, has always been the faith of Baptists, from the Apostles down through the dark ages, when the Baptists continued in their purity, among the hills of Wales, where the Church of Rome was never able to destroy them to the present day. The Campbellites, whom Mr. W. so unjustly calls Baptists, have nothing in common with Baptists, but immersion. And that they pervert, by teaching that it washes away sin. That is the old doctrine of baptismal regeneration, improved only by performing the true act of baptism instead of sprinkling. Mr. W. should, himself, claim the Campbellites on his own ground. One of the points on which much of his book depends, he expresses in the words "Baptism always before faith." Now, if Mr. W. believes this, and practices baptism before faith, and the Campbellites do the same,—then, so far, Mr. W. is a Campbellite. If the Campbellites baptize before faith and the baptists after, then the Campbellites are not Baptists. Observe the injustice and insincerity of Mr. W., in calling the Campbellites Baptists,

when he knew that they had nothing but immersion in common with them, and that for a purpose which Baptists utterly repudiate. In section 125, he inquires, "What is the use of baptism? What grace does it impart?" He then writes on vaguely, "censuring" alike Calvin, Luther, Zuingle, and the Baptists to his 127th section, when he directly states the grace he supposes baptism to impart.—"The grace," says he, "consisting in an engagement on the part of God, to last during the whole life, or at least as long as there was no open rebellion." This asserts that God will favor the baptized as long as they do not rebel. Will not God favor all the faithful, baptized or not? "In every nation those that fear him and work righteousness are accepted with him." According to Mr. W., baptism is an engagement on the part of God to do just what He would do without it.

Sec. 140 is entitled "The grace of calling conferred by baptism." And of those who heard John he says, "They had received by baptism a special grace of calling, which turned to the benefit of some." (Why not of all of them?) And again, "this grace of calling is also imparted to little children, through the baptism that their parents secure to them." And again, "Parents thus place their child, from his early youth, in the position of one called, of a disciple." This is an easy way to make disciples. Just sprinkle them, and it is done. Disciple means learner or scholar; but, according to Mr. W., an unconscious babe may be made a disciple, by sprinkling, before it is old enough to know its mother, and, dying then, of course it dies a disciple of Christ! But what does he mean by the "grace of calling?" Is it effectual calling by the Holy Spirit? Then he teaches baptismal regeneration. Is it an obligation to obey the Gospel when they become old enough to understand it? That obligation is upon all, baptized or not. Does he mean come and welcome to Jesus? This is universal.

It is gross and dangerous false teaching, that any grace whatever is imparted by the baptism of the unconverted, or of unconscious babes. Mr. W. also repeats, what most advocates of infant sprinkling have said, viz: Baptism is a seal of God's Covenant. The Bible, in not a single pas-

sage, ever calls baptism a seal. What covenant does God make with the unconverted? Is it to convert and save them if they obey the Gospel? That He will do for all, whether baptized or not. But it is said to be the seal of a covenant that God makes with parents who offer their children in baptism. What covenant does God make with parents respecting their children? Is it to save those children? Then God's covenant fails, for vast multitudes of those who are sprinkled in their infancy, live the worst characters, and die the most hopeless deaths. But God would convert them if they would believe the Gospel. So he would had they never been sprinkled. We wonder that good people are not shocked at calling baptism a seal of God's covenant, when they acknowledge that multitudes who have that seal already people the regions of the lost. If infant sprinkling be a seal of God's covenant, then the worst men in the world have been in covenant with God. Those infidels that conducted "the reign of terror" in France—all the great infidels of the world—Hume, Paine, Voltaire, Robespierre, Bolingbroke and Hobbs, according to this main position of Pedobaptism, had the seal of God's covenant. So of the Jesuits, with all their crimes, the managers of the horrible Inquisition, and the thousands of the victims of Papal superstition, that so sadden the hearts of Christians in this city;—all have the so-called seal of the covenant. And I have been credibly informed that Pedobaptist missionaries among the French Canadians, do not baptize or sprinkle their converts from Romanism, but accept as valid, *that* administered by Romish priests, with all the crossing, anointing with oil, and other mummeries connected with it. Do the Christian public who contribute to these missions, know that their missionaries are so closely allied to Romanism?

But, consider a little further the true grounds of the importance of Christian baptism. A believer, by thus obeying his Lord, comes into his visible church. Hence Paul to the Galatians, in the 3rd chapter, says: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. To be baptized into Christ is to make a profession of religion, by coming into his church in the way of his appointment. Baptized into Christ, *i. e.*, into his

body the church. Put on Christ; make a public profession of his religion, by being baptized. Baptism is utterly useless, but as a test of personal obedience, in thus putting on Christ. But, as such a test, it is more important than would be any great act possessing in itself intrinsic value. The Bible abounds in instances of the great effects of small things, involving the principles of obedience or disobedience. Notice a single one,—the first sin. It was a small thing for a woman to eat the fruit of a certain tree, as harmless as an apple, had it not been prohibited. But behold the multiplied woes that have flooded the world ever since, turning its millions into hell, as a consequence of the fall, and we shall never more admit the existence of small sins. How great a sin is disobedience in the smallest things! In this let us read the importance of obeying Christ in all his commands, baptism among the rest.

III. What is Baptism? As Christian ministers are commanded to baptize, and all believers to be baptized, we must learn what is to be done from the language employed. Mr. W. entitles section 16th—"Baptism is a Greek word, Anglicized, but not translated." He proceeds to say, that the Reformers were stopped in their translation by this word, because it had more than one meaning, and they could find no modern word that corresponded with it. He says, "Calvin inclined to the Baptist view," but had too much respect for the word of God to translate it so. The Reformers neither said nor believed any such thing. To prove that Mr. W.'s statement is untrue, we quote the language of Calvin and Luther. Luther: "It is to be regretted that the ancient form of baptism has not been restored." Calvin: "The word baptize signifies to immerse, and the rite of immersion was observed by the ancient church." To this agree the admissions of other most eminent Pedobaptists. Dr. George Campbell, a learned translator and commentator, says—"The word baptism, both in sacred authors and in classical, signifies to dip, to plunge, to immerse. It is always construed suitably to this meaning."

Storr and Flatt, in their System of Theology, which was long a standard text-book in Pedobaptist Theological seminaries, say—"The disciples of our Lord could understand

his command in no other manner than as enjoining immersion; and it is certainly to be lamented that Luther was not able to accomplish his wish with regard to the introduction of immersion in baptism, as he had done the restoration of wine in the Eucharist." We have in our possession similar admissions of more than seventy of the most eminent Pedobaptists, including Baxter, Doddridge, Adam Clark, James, Macknight, Neander, Moses Stewart, &c. We offer not these in proof of immersion. Baptists will accept no testimony on this subject but the Bible. We discard the human, and adhere to the Divine. We offer them to show the published views of these men, who, Mr. W. would have us believe, did not know how to translate the word baptize.

But, let us analyze the declaration, that the word has various meanings, and cannot be translated. It is a principle in language, that no word can have more than one *literal meaning*. All other uses of it are figurative. When twenty definitions are given to the same word, one only, and that is usually the first one, contains the true signification, and the others present the figurative applications of its one literal import. Otherwise we should be left wholly to caprice as to the import of language; and we could not write even a promissory note which might not be explained away by the various significations of words. Webster gives six definitions to the word pay. The fifth is "to retort upon another an injury received." The fourth is "to render what is due to a superior." To admit that these are more than figurative uses of the one idea of the word pay, would enable any man to avoid paying his note, by a quibble upon the meaning of the word. Admit this indefiniteness in language, and no man can prove the death of Christ. Webster's third definition of Crucify, is to "reject." And among his twenty-three definitions of death, we learn that to be dead, sometimes means to be "dull," and at others "gloomy." The inspired statements then, that Christ was crucified and died for sinners, only mean that he was "rejected" and became "gloomy." So, if baptize has various meanings, no man can ever be sure of what it means, in any given case.

All figurative uses of a word depend upon its one literal

sense. If a word has several different meanings, it is not translated without giving all those meanings. Suppose that in the German language there is a word that means "run and fire," and the officers use it as a word of command in battle: and suppose we wish to translate that word into English for the use of English officers and men, —to translate it to run, or to fire, would be translating it only in part; and the soldier who should hear the word in German and should only run, or only fire, would not obey the command. If the word should mean to run *or* to fire, when the officer gives the word and wishes them to fire, and the fate of the day depends upon firing, and the soldiers should run, as they would have a right to do, if that was one of the meanings of the word, it would be embarrassing. So, if baptize means to immerse, to sprinkle, and to wash, it is not translated without giving them all. To give one of those meanings in a translation would be to conceal a part of the truth; and it is quite as easy to give all the definitions of a word, in a translation, as to give one of them. If baptize means to immerse, and to sprinkle, and to wash, it is as easy to translate it so, as to give it one of the meanings alone.

And if to be baptized (Acts ii. 38) means to be immersed, and sprinkled, and washed, the command is not obeyed until one has received them all. To obey a command, is to do all that the words of the command denote. Mr. W. says the word baptise means immerse, wash, sprinkle; therefore, he is not baptized until he has received them all. If it is said that the word means immerse *or* sprinkle *or* wash, then one is as truly baptized when he has simply washed, as when he has been immersed, or sprinkled. Such are the natural results of false premises. Baptize has one single meaning, and that is immerse. But writers have used it, as they have most other words, in a figurative sense; and the force of the figure, in every case, has depended wholly upon the one literal import—immerse. To say that God has put one of the two standing ordinances of his church into language that cannot be understood, and cannot be translated into the languages of all for whom the Bible is intended, is to impeach the Divine wisdom or benevolence. If the Bible be indefinite, and cannot be

understood by all Christians, we are thrown upon the opinions of men for a knowledge of our duty. This is Romanism, pure and simple. But what is the meaning of the Greek word *Baptizo?* We must learn from Greek Lexicons, and its use in the Greek Classics.

No Greek Lexicon I have ever seen gives sprinkle as a definition of *Baptizo*. I have heard that there is *one*, by a Congregationalist minister; but I have never seen it, and believe it is not used in any college or seminary. Not one of the Lexicons used as standard works, in any of the universities of Europe or America, gives such a definition. This is the strongest possible evidence that the lexicographers and the colleges are agreed, that *Baptizo* never means to sprinkle. Mr. W. says, in section 19—"Dictionaries give no less than fifteen definitions to this word, the principal of which are, Immerse, wash, sprinkle, purify and dye." Others have made statements somewhat similar. But it is a serious error, arising from putting two words together and treating them as one. Mr. W. says—"The word *Baptizo*, or as it is often met shorter, *Bapto*, —these two forms, it is agreed on both sides, being but two different aspects of the same root, and the first derived from the second." It is not "agreed on both sides that these words are the same." *Baptizo* and *Bapto* are both derived from an old Greek root, and each has a use which the other has not. *Bapto* is sometimes used for dyeing, because that was performed by dipping the article in the coloring fluid. *Baptizo* is never so used or so defined by any lexicon. *Baptizo* and its cognates are always used for the Christian ordinance; while, in none of its forms, is *Bapto* ever so used.

Note.—In July, 1843, there was published with great care at the Oxford University Press, the now celebrated and standard Greek Lexicon of Messrs. Liddell & Scott. It was founded on the great one of Passow, published in Germany, but embraced an amount of other investigations far beyond his.

They give the following meanings in the first edition of their Lexicon:—

Baptizo, 1, "*To dip repeatedly, dip under*, middle voice, *to bathe, hence to steep, wet, to pour upon, drench;*" 2, "*To dip a*

In speaking of a Christian ordinance, why did not Mr. W. have the candor to confine himself to the words which the Holy Spirit had used in describing it? Why try to make the unlearned believe that *Baptizo* has a meaning that no lexicon gives it, and that is only found in the definitions of another word, and that word never employed in the Bible, in speaking of Christian baptism?

Mr. W. states that certain writers have produced an overwhelming array of passages from the Classics, where the word cannot possibly be translated immerse. This is a mis-statement. Of his "overwhelming array of passages," he only mentions one; and, of course, what he regards the most conclusive one. It is from Homer, describing a battle between the frogs and the mice, in which the mice were wounded, and the lake said to have been tinged with their blood. Why did not Mr. W. tell his readers that no form of the word *Baptizo* is used in this passage; but *Bapto*, which is never employed to designate the Christian ordinance, and which cannot be anglicised so as to read baptise. He would have saved himself the trouble of ridiculing the idea that the lake was immersed in the blood of the mice, by stating that *Baptizo* is not in the passage, but that *Bapto*, a word signifying to dye, is employed; and that a proper translation would have been—"The waters of the lake were dyed or tinged with the blood of

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vessel, draw water;" 3, To baptize, N. T. In the next edition, "*to steep, to wet, to pour upon, to drench,*" are all expunged.

If a single instance could have been produced from the researches of Passow, or of any preceding lexicographer, or from a most extensive examination of all the important passages of Greek literature bearing upon it, in the course of a learned controversy of two hundred years, these meanings never would have been retracted by men who are daily in the habit of sprinkling infants.

The definition, in the second edition, is,—

Baptizo, 1, *To dip repeatedly;* of ships, *to sink them;* passive voice, *to bathe.* 2, *To draw water.* 3, *To baptize,* New Testament.

To steep, to wet, to pour upon, to drench, given as definitions, were abandoned and expunged as untenable, within a year and a half of their first publication. See Curtis' Progress of Baptist Principles. Book II. chap. I. sections 1 and 6.

the mice." Homer said nothing about baptizing the lake, nor did he use a word from which baptize can be made. Thus the Lexicons and the Classics are unanimous, that the only literal meaning of *Baptizo* is to immerse.

Take another view. The Greek language is remarkably precise and discriminating. When Greeks would speak

1. Of rubbing and washing their hands, they use *Nipto*.
2. Washing and soaking clothes, *Pluno*.
3. Bathing for cleansing the body, *Louo*.
4. Pouring, or pouring out, *Cheuo*.
5. Dashing, or throwing on a quantity of water, *Raino*.
6. Affusion, or sprinkling, *Rantizo*.
7. Immersion, BAPTIZO.

If the Saviour had designed to say, Go teach all nations, *immersing them*, He could have used no stronger language than he did.

But, suppose He had wished to say sprinkle, what word would he have employed? Evidently *Rantizo*, which always and indisputably means to sprinkle. The New Testament writers have frequently desired to say sprinkle, and they have used *Rantizo*, and our translators have rendered it sprinkle. Heb. 12, 24, is an example. Had Christ designed to say sprinkle, would He not have used the same word that He inspired His Apostles to use to express it? Hence no word in the Greek language could make the subject of Christian baptism plainer than it is. But even with the Greek word transferred into our language, Anglicised and not translated, this is plainer than other subjects of controversy among Christians. The whole Christian world acknowledge that immersion is valid Baptism. No churches or ministers, so far as we know, ever require Christians who have been immersed, to be sprinkled, in order to obey Christ, and become members with them. Even Mr. W. himself, although he styles immersion "a fiction, an indecency, and a blasphemy," admits that all dictionaries give immerse as the first meaning of baptize. And he nowhere intimates that he should require a Baptist, who should propose to become a member of his church, to be sprinkled. Strange that Christ, in instituting and describing an ordinance, should employ a word to designate it, the very first

meaning of which should require an indecency and a blasphemy in him who obeys it. We should suppose Mr. W. would plainly state that those who had only been immersed, and therefore guilty of an indecency and a blasphemy, on application for membership in his church, must be sprinkled as discreetly as the Episcopal Prayer Book requires the priest to dip, in the water, the child when he baptizes it.* But so plainly is immersion baptism, that the whole Christian world fellowships it. Seldom do we find a man so exasperated against the truth as to call that beautiful ordinance, so impressive to beholders, and so often attended with the special influences of the Holy Ghost, an indecency and a blasphemy. And when we do meet with one, we find him so full of contradictions, and so careless in his statements, as to leave no doubt that his language is rather a burst of passion than a result of conviction. Why was not *Baptizo* translated? Not because of any difficulty in understanding the word, or of rendering it into English. It was because King James, in the rules he gave his translators, forbade them to translate certain words, which he called "*Old ecclesiastical words*," among which was *Baptizo*.

But the unlearned are not under the necessity of going to the Greek language to learn their duty. The circumstances, the design, and the figurative uses of baptism, leave no doubt in unsophisticated minds that it is immersion. John baptized in Jordan. This does not prove immersion. But we have no need to go into a river to sprinkle. And in the baptism of Christ in Jordan, when he came up out of the water, and the Holy Ghost descended upon him, and the voice was heard from heaven,—the fact that "He came up out of the water" is not positive proof that He was immersed. For that we rely upon the word baptize. But it will take a great deal of sophistication to make an honest mind believe that all that pains was taken to sprinkle. The great mass of the Christian world

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* In the English edition of the Prayer Book, used in this city, the words are—"And then naming it after them (if they shall certify him that the child may well endure it) he shall dip it in the water discreetly and warily."

believes that Jesus Christ was immersed in Jordan; and they are feeling more and more the force of His words on that occasion—"*thus it becometh* US,"—Himself and all His followers. Thus, Christian friends, it becometh us; "if ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." So of the Eunuch. Mr. W. labors long to show that their going down into the water does not prove his immersion. No Baptist pretends that it does. The word baptized proves the immersion. We only say the circumstances were such as would not have been demanded by sprinkling. Mr. W.'s remarks on the words "down into" and "up out of," as only meaning down to and up from, are an old method of endeavoring to avoid a plain conclusion. If it were established that such is the meaning of these phrases, it would be a great relief to the wicked, who are threatened with being "turned into hell." They might justly say: "As 'into' only means 'down to,' we are in no danger of ever getting into hell. And on this principle of interpretation, Daniel in the lion's den, and The Worthies in the fiery furnace, would prove to have been no miracles at all. They were only cast down *to*, not into, the den and the fiery furnace, and were in no danger of lions and fire.

To all ingenuous minds, not blinded by prepossessions, the statements in the Epistles are entirely conclusive for immersion. Romans vi. 3–5: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death." Col. ii. 12: "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him."

The only attempt Mr. W. makes to avoid proof so positive is, arbitrarily to assert that all this is spiritual. This is the place to expose one of the great errors of his book—viz., the doctrine of two baptisms, on which he lays much stress,—one of water, and the other of the Holy Ghost. Why did he not say four or more baptisms? There is a baptism of fire, one of suffering, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and water baptism. He entitles Sec. 134, "The baptism of fire is not that of the Holy Ghost, but is the baptism of hell." Is his baptism of hell a sprinkling? Men can hardly be said to be sprinkled with hell. In Bible language, they are "turned" or "cast into" it

When Christ says, "I have a baptism to be baptized with" (Luke xii. 50), by common consent he referred to the agony of the garden and the cross. According to Mr. W. we have four baptisms. But the Bible says—"One Lord, one faith, one baptism," Eph. iv. 5. How does this statement agree with the four uses of baptism—fire, water, suffering, and the Holy Ghost? There is but one *literal* baptism, but any number of figurative uses of the term. But how shall we know whether it be a real baptism or a figurative one, in any given instance? Whenever the word, in any of its forms, is used without qualifications, it is literal water baptism. When the word is used figuratively, we are so informed by the language of the passage in which it occurs. In Acts viii. 12, "They were baptized, both men and women," (why did it not add, "and children"?) we have simple water baptism. So in Eph. iv. 5, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism," we have the ordinance of Christian baptism in water. But in the words, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire," the words convey the idea that it is figurative and spiritual. And when Christ says, "I have a baptism to baptized with," he uses the word figuratively, and he so informs us by calling it *a* baptism. Without adopting this principle of interpretation, we should be left to mere human opinion of the import of the term in any given passage; in which case, the word would be no revelation at all.

Again, all figurative uses of this word, derive their entire force from the fact, that it means immerse. Sprinkling would be a weak figure, to express the dreadful agony of the Son of God, in Gethsemane and on Calvary. That anguish was so overwhelming that Jesus calls it *a baptism* —an immersion. So in the baptism of the Holy Ghost, the force of the figure depends upon the meaning of the word. It is not the manner of applying, or receiving it, but the completeness of the work. When Mr. W. speaks of the pouring out of the Spirit and the shedding of his influences, as denoting sprinkling or pouring for baptism, he entirely mistakes the idea of the revelation. It is the copiousness of his influences, and not the manner of bestowing them, that is presented. When Christians pray

for the baptism of the Holy Ghost, they design to implore his abundant influence. They already possess more of that influence than would be expressed by sprinkling. They mean to ask that the Spirit may control all their powers and affections, as completely as the water covers the body in baptism.

On this point, the practice of the Greek Church is significant. Although they have fallen into the error of baptizing infants, yet they always immerse, averring that the word never meant anything else. The fact that the Greek Church is corrupt would not prove that they are not competent judges of the signification of a word in their own language.

We will notice a few of Mr. W.'s objections to immersion, as examples of the folly of them all.

Section 13. "The rite of immersion is practised by the most corrupt churches." So is sprinkling. Is any church more corrupt than the Roman Catholic? Yet ever since they introduced it, in the fourteenth century, instead of immersion, they have thought as much of sprinkling as Mr. W. The question is not who teaches or believes a doctrine? but is it taught in the Bible?

"If we should believe the Baptists," says Mr. W., "baptism and baptize are not legitimately English words." He has said precisely the same thing in his next preceding section, which he has entitled "Baptise is a Greek word, Anglicised, but not translated." No Baptist has said more.

Section 18th. "Immerse means to drown." Every child who can read the English language knows better.—Drowning is not immersion, nor the effect of it. It may be the effect of continuing one in the water long enough. The immersions of the Pharisees, their furniture, &c., Mr. W. ridicules, because he either did know, or did not care to state, the facts of the case. These washings were purely ceremonial, and whenever the word baptize was used, the act consisted in plunging the thing spoken of into the water, and immediately drawing it out. His remarks about the supposed half-million baptized by John, and his herculean labor in lifting so much human flesh, betrays a weakness or something worse, not often seen. In a pro-

per baptism there is no *lifting* of the body. The candidate steps into the desired depth of water, the administrator, with one hand upon the folded hands of the candidate, and the other on the back of the shoulders, produces a moderate inclination of the body, until the water passes over the head, and then gently restores it to an upright position. This is done almost as easily as one can move his hand in the water. A weak minister can baptize large and tall men, even including Mr. W.'s "grenadiers," with perfect ease. We found no more difficulty in baptizing, in the city of New York, in 1843, a man weighing over three hundred pounds, than we did the girl of nine years.

As it respects the time required for immersion, it is a fact of common observation, that as much time is occupied in sprinkling as in immersing the same number of candidates. A Baptist minister in the West Indies baptized one hundred and twenty persons in sixty minutes, with ease and quietness. Another minister, in Northern Vermont, in the coldest of the winter, baptized a large number of candidates, even more rapidly, without the appearance of being in haste. The baptisms on the day of pentecost need not have required a half hour's time for their administration. Suppose the seventy disciples whom Jesus sent forth to have been present (there were about a hundred and twenty names, Acts 1:15), and the eleven apostles,—making eighty-one administrators; and then suppose (what is not stated) that three thousand were baptized in one day, it would have been thirty-seven candidates for each. If they immersed as rapidly as our English missionaries have recently done in the West Indies, it would have required eighteen and one-half minutes to baptize the whole. The Bible says, "They that gladly received the word were immersed;" and we believe it, without any reference to these suppositions. We have introduced them to show what may have been true, but without feeling the least obligation to explain how what God says was done could have been performed.

Mr. W. further objects to immersion, because of the expense of baptisteries. We pass by his exaggeration of their cost, and the fact that the font in some churches costs more than any baptistery of modern times. This

argument of dollars and cents is the old infidel argument against Christianity, that it costs too much to support the ministry, build edifices, etc.; and Mr. W. and the infidels alike have an illustrious predecessor in this line of argument. Did not Judas inquire, why this waste? This might have been sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor.

He would further deter persons from following their Master by calling it an "indecency." Is it more indecent than circumcision, about which he says so much? Contrast his language with that beautiful hymn* of the talented and refined Mrs. Sigourney, herself not a Baptist, descriptive of a scene she witnessed of the baptism of females in a river.

In section 33, Mr. W. says: "We knew a Baptist brother who actually fell into the basin from a great height, and came near being drowned." Does he expect any one to believe such an assertion? A baptistery is never under a gallery, or in any place where a person could fall two feet and get into it.

As it respects immersion being dangerous to health, every medical man knows it is a fiction. Wet the feet, and a delicate person may take cold. Wet the whole body, and the equilibrium of the system is preserved, and no danger is incurred. Not an instance has ever been authenticated, of injury received by a candidate in baptism. We baptized, in Lake Champlain, in the coldest part of the winter of 1841, a lady, a member of the Presbyterian Church, who had long been too feeble to be often at the house of God, not only with safety but with great pleasure to the candidate. We knew her years after, in better health, and an active Christian and valuable member of the Baptist church.

Section 35: "Immersion is an old heathen practice." So is walking, and eating, and sleeping, and singing. We do not know that they are less appropriate to us on that account. The circulation of tracts originated with infidels, for the dissemination of their sentiments. But we have never heard this fact offered as a reason why Christians

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* See the outside of cover.

should not promulgate the Gospel by means of religious tracts.

A further objection of Mr. W., is, that the ordinances belong to all, and with some, immersion is impossible. As it respects ill-health, it is equally true of other duties. Family worship is a duty, but not when one is so ill as not to be able even to converse with his friends. It is the duty of all to attend the public worship of God, but not when unable to ride or sit. Christ requires us to be immersed, but not when too ill. We can die in just as much peace without having performed any of those duties as with, if it was impossible for us to perform them.

The difficulty of finding water, in high latitudes and dry countries, is without weight. This would lie with greater force against the Lord's Supper; for it is much more easy, in some countries, to find water for immersion, than wine for the communion. There are tribes of men who never saw any wine, nor do they know what it is. But we can pursue these follies no further.

Mr. W.'s 14th section is entitled "Immersion is deemed essential by the Baptists." We do deem it essential to obedience to Christ, and are fully persuaded that without it there is no baptism. The Bible knows but "one baptism," and that is "buried," "planted," or immersed. To say baptize by sprinkling, is to say immerse by sprinkling. To say baptism by immersion, is to say immersion by immersion. To sprinkle a person and call it baptism, is no nearer gospel baptism than to make on him the sign of the cross, and call that baptism. The words are definite and positive. Sprinkling is not a mode or form of baptism, but has no relation to baptism. Baptists are persistently charged with being strenuous for a *mode*, and contentious about the quantity of water. Nothing can be further from the truth. We care nothing for the mode of baptism. It may be in the morning or evening, in a river or baptistery; the candidate may stand or kneel. The quantity of water is nothing. It may be a baptistery, a creek, lake, or ocean; provided only the command of Christ to be immersed be obeyed. Those who sprinkle, want water enough for the purpose: with the Baptists, it is precisely the same. We only desire water enough to

nable us to obey the command of Christ. The only thing upon which we insist, is the act which the Saviour enjoins: simply baptism, and not the mode. The Bible says nothing of the mode; but simply commands immersion, without prescribing in what mode we shall immerse. Let all understand, that our practice results, not from a preference for a mode, but from attachment to the will of our Redeemer.

We know of but one passage, in which the word sprinkle occurs, that Mr. W. and others quote, to prove baptism to be sprinkling,—Ezekiel 36:25. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean" 1. If this refers to Christian baptism, why was not the word baptize used? 2. Were this baptism, it would prove baptismal regeneration,—"and ye shall be clean." 3. But observe, this is something Jehovah says He will do. He does not command them to have clean water sprinkled upon them, nor require his ministers to do it, but says, "*I will.*" The following anecdote gives the common-sense view of it. A Pedobaptist minister was urging a plain Dutch woman to have her infant sprinkled, and she requested him to give her the scripture authority for it. He quoted this passage from Ezekiel. The woman replied, "That is good, Domine; and the next time it rains, I will hold the baby out, and the Lord shall do it himself." 4. Who are the proper subjects of baptism? For proof on this point, as well as every other branch of the subject, we rely solely upon the Bible. The Great Commission is conclusive. Matt. 28:19, 20,—"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you." Mr. W. has labored more to pervert and abuse this commission than any other part of the sacred volume. Perhaps because it stood so much in his way.

In sec. 46, he lays down his position in the following language:—"The relation of baptism to faith can offer but three alternatives. 1. Baptism always after faith. This is the Baptist opinion. 2. Baptism before and after faith; before, for the children, and after, for adults. This is the Pedobaptist opinion. 3. Baptism always before

faith. This last is our opinion, which happens to be neither Baptist nor Pedobaptist."

We leave Pedobaptists to deal with such an advocate of their cause as they please. There certainly is an inconsistency in having baptism before faith for one class, and after for another. Nor is it strange, that, under such a system, "logical minds," as Mr. W. says, are not satisfied, and are inclined to go over to the Baptists. But, in all this, we have only to do with the question of baptism before or after faith. To make out his baptism always before faith, Mr. W. is obliged to mystify the Great Commission. He devotes his sections, from 65 to 75, to make it appear possible that this commission may be consistent with baptism before faith, and especially the baptism of children. In this commission, there are three steps. 1. We are to *teach* all nations. All commentators agree that *Matheteuo* means to make disciples by teaching. Hence the first point is, Go, disciple all nations, or people (as the word *ethrios* denotes). Mr. W. admits that it is to disciple all nations, but has before taught that we make disciples by baptizing. But the Great Commission directs us to make disciples by teaching. 2. The next step is to baptize those we have discipled. Disciple first, and baptize afterwards. 3. The last step is teaching them to observe all things whatsoever Jesus has commanded. Mr. W. labors to make it appear, that the last teaching in the commission is a repetition of the first, and that we are to disciple by baptism, and afterwards teaching them.

I know not how much of a Greek scholar Mr. W. is, or whether he ever read critically the Greek of this commission; but he certainly gives no correct view of it. The teaching before baptism, is a form of *Mathetuo*, to disciple by teaching. The teaching after baptism, is from *didasco*, which denotes the didactic instruction given to those who are already Christians. The first, is the preaching of the great facts of the Gospel, the belief of which brings one into a vital union with Christ. The other, is the presentation of the various duties that belong to the Christian's life. The disingenuousness of endeavouring to make it appear that the two teachings in the commission are identical, when they are translations of Greek words so essen-

tially different, is sufficiently apparent. He further adds, that the commission does not command us to baptize women, any more than it does children. The command is to baptize all, among all nations,—men, women, and children, whom we have first discipled. Mr. W. says this command is to baptize children. So it is, just as soon as they believe, or become disciples. To Baptists, that is a beautiful text, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not." We preach to them to come: many receive the word joyfully, and we baptize hundreds of them every year. We act upon the Great Commission, and baptize all the children who believe. Here is the Baptist practice intelligible to all. Preach Christ to persons, and when they believe baptize them, and then teach them all the duties and privileges of a Christian life.

This plain import of the commission is sustained by subsequent apostolic examples. Acts 2:41,—"Then they that gladly received His word were baptized." These were Christians. Acts 8:12,—"When they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Acts 8:36, 37,—"And the Eunuch said, See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." He professed his faith, and was baptized. Acts 16.14, 15,—"And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us, whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there." Here is a person who worshipped God, whose heart the Lord opened to understand the Gospel, and who was faithful to the Lord,—was she not a Christian? This was one of the household baptisms. Were there infants baptized? She and her household were baptized. Not a word is said of children or husband. She was not a married woman, as far as the record informs us. She invited them to come into *her* house,

which she would hardly have called the residence of her husband or children. The last verse of this chapter informs us who were her household, by calling them "*brethren.*"

The account of the jailor, in Acts 16, is another plain instance of believer's baptism. "They spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all that were in his house." They were all old enough to hear preaching. "He rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." They were all believers.

The only other household baptism recorded in the New Testament,—that of Stephanus, 1 Cor. 1:16,—is also proof positive of believers' baptism only. His household is mentioned as baptized; but as no children are mentioned, and there are numerous households containing no infants, this could not afford even presumptive evidence of infant baptism. Many whole households,—parents and children and servants, in which there are no infants, but all are believers,—are baptized by Baptist ministers. This is a frequent occurrence. But, in the last chapter of 1 Corinthians, the Holy Spirit has decided the character of Stephanus's household. "They are the first-fruits of Achaia, and have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." Thus, in the only three household baptisms recorded in the Bible, the Holy Spirit has enabled us to do what is unusual, prove a negative; viz., that there was not an infant baptized. The only three cases mentioned, as possible instances of infant baptism, are positive examples of believers' baptism only.

To meet all this array of evidence, Mr. W. undertakes to draw an unwarrantable distinction between disciples and brethren, and between *saving* and *assenting* faith. This is immaterial to the point at issue. Even his absurdities and fallacies under this head do not do away with the fact, that persons heard the Gospel, and professed to believe it, before they were baptized. No man has ever shown that there is a single command for, or example of, the baptism of any but a professed believer in Christ. In the absence of any such command, Mr. W. pursues a usual course by demanding authority for certain other practices. Sec. 122, he asks for our authority for baptiz-

ing women. The Great Commission requires it; Acts 16. Lydia was baptized. Acts 8:12,—"They were baptized, both men and women." This is good authority. He also inquires on what authority we administer the Lord's Supper to females. Gal. 3:38,—"There is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." If all one, then they have the same privileges and ordinances.

Mr. W., as most Pedobaptists have done, presents circumcision as an argument in favor of infant baptism. For all who wish to be strictly Bible Christians, it is a sufficient answer, that the Scriptures nowhere, in a single passage, make the least reference to any connection between baptism and circumcision.

In the church at Antioch, there arose a dissension respecting the necessity of circumcision for Gentile converts to Christianity. To settle this question, an apostolic council was held at Jerusalem. The question was thoroughly argued by that council, and settled, and letters sent accordingly, informing them that they need not be circumcised. A single sentence from that council—so much demanded by the circumstances—would have put the matter at rest forever. When that dissension arose, had the ministers just said, "Brethren, do not contend about circumcision, for baptism has come instead of it," the question would have been settled without a council.

The only possible reason for the silence of the apostles at Antioch, and the council at Jerusalem, on this subject, is, that circumcision and baptism had no relation to each other. That one has taken the place of the other is mere human imagination. When, therefore, we hear a man argue, that baptism is now in the place of circumcision, it is sufficient to inquire, Who says so? Certainly not God in his Book, but man in his inferences. Such inferences are most dangerous errors. Whence the burning of incense, the anointing of oil, the various sprinklings, and the gaudy robes of the priesthood, among the papists. They are borrowed or inferred from the Jewish service and priesthood; and with as good a show of propriety and scripture authority, as Protestants, in inferring infant sprinkling from circumcision and the Abrahamic covenant.

Pedobaptists speak of the blessings of the Abrahamic

covenant resting upon his seed, and therefore upon Gentile Christians, because they are Abraham's seed; and, as Abraham circumcised his children, Christians should baptize theirs. In this line of argument, there is a fatal flaw. This principle, which is the main support of infant baptism, if legitimately carried out, would admit only of the baptism of believers. According to this system, children are to be baptized because they are Abraham's seed. Now Abraham's children must be either Jews or believers in Christ. Gal. 3:28,—"If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." This is spoken of Gentiles, who, by faith, are made the spiritual seed of Abraham, while Jews are his natural seed. Our children cannot be Abraham's natural seed, for we are Gentiles. They cannot be his spiritual seed until they become Christ's by faith. Hence the Pedobaptist system itself, when carried out, requires believers' baptism only. Thus error always fails to be consistent, while truth fits everywhere.

But, should we not dedicate our children to God? Certainly, we should. But that does not prove that we should sprinkle them, unless that be God's form of dedication. We are under obligation to dedicate all we have to God. If sprinkling be the form of dedication, then we should sprinkle our houses and lands, and goods, and horses and carriages, and money. They are not worthy to be parents, who do not dedicate their child to God, before the ceremony of sprinkling can be performed.

In Sec. 132, Mr. W. avers, that neglecting to baptize children by the Baptists, is cause of their remaining unconverted and becoming infidel. The facts which may everywhere be observed, prove the statement to be untrue. We have made the examination extensively, and find that, in no other denomination, is the proportion of the children of the members of the church, who give evidence of being born again, and at so tender an age, so large, as among the Baptists. We challenge investigation. And this is a natural result of teaching them, from their early childhood, that no form can benefit them without a new heart, —that religion is a matter to which each must attend for himself personally.

Infant sprinkling cannot be harmless, but must be a positive evil to the great majority of those who receive it. Those who would shudder at the idea of baptismal regeneration, yet teach that there is some benefit conferred by infant sprinkling. They would not practice it unless they believed it did some good. An unregenerate person, who believes that he is in some way better, for an ordinance received in his infancy, is less likely to feel his true condition as a sinner and his dependence on Christ. This, then, is connected prominently with vital godliness, —a change of heart, personal obedience, and a holy life.

Pedobaptism is not a non-essential, harmless thing, but a dreadful evil. It is the pillar of Popery. Who supposes it could stand without it? National churches, with all their evils, are sustained by it. It has produced Puseyism in the English Church, and Unitarianism in New England, even among the descendants of the Puritans. In the land of Luther, where the fires of the Reformation burned most brilliantly, infant sprinkling has almost extinguished vital godliness. There, even the poor fallen female cannot get a license from the civil authorities to pursue her dreadful business without bringing a certificate from the minister, that she has been confirmed and partaken of the Lord's Supper. Thus human devices introduced into the ordinances of religion tend only to evil, and that continually.

Mr. W., as others have done before him, notices the baptism of the Jewish nation "unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea," as evidence of sprinkling. That baptism was wholly figurative, as shown by the phrases "in the cloud and in the sea" and "unto Moses." The cloud was a shade by day and a pillar of fire by night, and hence not a cloud of water; and, as they passed through the sea dryshod, it is not in proof, that a drop of water touched them. Hence, here was no water baptism at all.

As some of the last sections of this book contain the most exaggerated misstatements of the views of Baptists, and of their sentiments toward other Christians, couched in language the most unbecoming and unchristian, we shall neither repeat them nor reply to them, further than to notice one of his logical results of practising exclusively believers' immersion as Christian baptism; viz.:—

V. Close Communion. By this is understood celebrating the Lord's Supper in the church, and inviting none but members of the church to a church ordinance. Many are convinced that believers' immersion is the only baptism found in the New Testament, but make "close communion" an excuse for not practising their convictions. We trust we can entirely relieve every ingenuous inquirer, and demonstrate that regular or close communion is the only true and scriptural position; and, that mixed or open communion is a wrong, opposed to the claims of truth and the interests of the souls of men. We use the terms close and open communion, not because they are correct, but because they are so frequently employed and generally understood. We shall employ the term open communion, as denoting participation at the Lord's table of members of different churches, dissimilar in faith and practice; and close communion, as denoting confining that ordinance to the actual membership of a particular church, or those who might become members without any change of faith or practice.

1. Intercommunion is not a Bible question. It is as silent on open communion as it is respecting infant baptism. It says not a word about either; and yet open communionists often really suppose they have scripture authority for their practice. But that authority is only their own inference from the Word of God, and not that Word itself. This proving things by inference and explanation, and not by the language of the Scriptures, is the source of all the errors of those who profess to believe the Bible. On the points of error, they believe not the Bible, but their own exposition of it. Look at the leading passages quoted to justify open communion. Romans 14:1,—"Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations." What does this say of the Lord's Supper? Nothing; but it means it. That is a mere human opinion. "We ought also to love one another;" "Let brotherly love continue;" "That they also may be one;" and all that numerous class of passages that speak of Christian love and harmony. These are all silent respecting the Lord's Supper. It is impossible to prove anything by witnesses that know nothing

about it. This is true of all the passages of Scripture quoted to prove open communion. Of all we have ever read on the subject, we do not recollect a single passage quoted that even names the Lord's Supper at all. This open communion is a mere matter of feeling, and not of revelation. We respect the feeling that sometimes leads to open communion. It is an amiable feeling, but perverted. We ought to love one another; but the Bible nowhere presents the Lord's table as a test of that love.

2. Close Communion may be read from the Bible, chapter and verse, without note or comment. Acts 2:41, 42,—"Then they that gladly received His word were baptized. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers." Witness the points in this narrative. 1st, The Word was preached; 2nd, Certain of the hearers received it gladly—believed; 3rd, Then they were baptized; 4th, They then were in the apostles' doctrine and in fellowship; 5th, And then in "breaking of bread," a term used for the Lord's Supper. Here we read the practice of strict Baptists; and it is not necessary to explain the passage to show that it contains our practice. Here is an inspired example, occurring under the ministry of the apostles, on the occasion of the first descent of the Holy Ghost; and we can safely challenge the world, to show where modern Baptists deviate, in the least particular, from it: and, in all the New Testament, there is neither precept nor example of any different practice.

3. Again: the principles involved in our communion are the same as in most other Christian churches. I do not recollect the creed of any church that recognizes the right of unbaptized persons to partake of the Lord's Supper. With all who receive this as the scripture view, the question resolves itself into this,—What is Christian baptism? Our difference is respecting baptism, and not communion. Hence the best Pedobaptist writers publish the following sentiments:—"If we believed what the Baptists do respecting baptism, we should practice as they do respecting communion;" and, addressing their brethren, they add, "therefore, it is uncharitable to cen-

sure their communion." We will illustrate how communion is precisely the same in the Baptist church as in the Presbyterian church; and the Presbyterian church shall suffice for all Pedobaptist churches. Suppose Mr. Benson, who has been notoriously wicked, becomes converted. His devotion and spirituality have been as marked as was his previous wickedness. All Christians, of all churches, delight to have him in their prayer-meetings and participate in the exercises. No one doubts his conversion. Suppose, also, that he embraces the notion, that water baptism is done away, and there is now no baptism but of the Holy Ghost (and there are many such cases); but he thinks it may be well enough to remember the death of Christ in the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. On a certain day, they are to have communion in the afternoon in the Presbyterian Church, and in the evening in the Baptist Church. Mr. Benson resolves to go to communion in the Presbyterian Church. He goes in, and says to Deacon Jones, "I desire to sit down at the communion in your church to-day."—Deacon Jones replies, "That is not according to the faith and practice of our church."

Benson. "Why not?"

Dea. J. "Because you have not been baptized, and, therefore, are not a member of any church."

B. "I have been baptized, as I understand it, and am a member, as I believe, of the great Universal Church—the spiritual kingdom of Christ."

Dea. J. "We doubt not you are a member of the spiritual church; but how do you understand baptism?"

B. "I understand it to be a change of heart by the Spirit, which I call the baptism of the Holy Ghost."

Dea. J. "We do not understand it so, and, as a church, must judge of the qualifications for its ordinances. It would be irregular for you to come to the communion."

B. "This is pretty hard: it is close communion. Do you not supppose we shall commune together in heaven?"

Dea. J. "I trust we shall commune together in heaven; but that will not be an outward ordinance, of eating bread and drinking wine, but that commingling

of Christian feeling that we now experience together in our prayer-meetings."

In the evening, Mr. Benson says he will go to the Baptist Church, and endeavor to commune there. Dea. Jones proposes to go with him. Mr. B. offers himself in the Baptist Church, and is not received, after going through with precisely the same conversation that passed between him and Dea. Jones in the Presbyterian Church. Dea. Jones then offers himself as a communicant, and is not received. The following dialogue ensues:—

Dea. J. "Why am I not entitled to come to the Lord's table?"

Baptist. "Because you have not been baptized. We treat you just as you did Mr. Benson this afternoon, when you declined to admit him to your communion, because he had not been baptized. We think you were right, and believe we are."

Dea. J. "But I have been baptized, as I understand it."

Baptist. "How do you understand it?"

Dea. J. "I was sprinkled in my infancy, at least, so they tell me; and that is good enough for me."

Baptist. "We do not so understand it; and therefore, on your own principles, it would be irregular for you to participate."

Dea. J. "But, do you not think I am a Christian? and will there be any close communion in heaven?"

Baptist. "We doubt not you are a pious man, and we shall commune together in heaven, not in these emblems of the Lord's death,—these are only for visible, organized churches,—but in that union of Christian feeling which we so much enjoy here."

Now, in this case, do we not decline to receive Deacon Jones and Mr. Benson for the same reason, and for precisely the reason that Deacon Jones and the Presbyterian Church rejected Mr. Benson? Hence the terms of communion are precisely the same in both churches. All churches are close communion who place any limits whatever to participation at the Lord's table; and we know of no church which has not such limits, and that does not exclude some persons from their communion. The only

question, therefore, between Baptists and others, is as to where the limit shall be. But, as most churches believe it should be confined to baptized believers who are walking in the truth, the question is not whether baptism be a pre-requisite (that is admitted), but what is baptism?

4. "Is it not the Lord's table?" It is; and that is the reason why we dare not alter His terms of participation. Were it our table, we should use our own discretion in giving invitations to it.

5. Shall we not all commune together in heaven, and why not here? All true Christians will commune together in heaven, and do commune together here; but not all the members, perhaps, of any particular church, for they are probably not all Christians. But that communion will not be eating bread and drinking wine, but union in the love of God. Those who do not possess that love here are not Christians. Hence all Christians do commune together on earth, just as they will in heaven, only it will be perfect there, as all sin will be done away.

6. "But," says one, "I am a member of the great universal church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven, and therefore have a right to the Lord's table wherever it is spread." That great spiritual church encloses all now in heaven, and all the elect yet to be born, infants and all, and has no ordinances. Ordinances belong only to visible churches on earth. The fact that a man is a member of the church universal does not entitle him to ordinances, because that church has none. To enjoy ordinances, it is necessary to be a member of a church that has them.

7. "But if I obey the truth by being immersed and unite with a regular Baptist church, I may not, perhaps, properly commune with my parents, wife, or children; for they may all belong to other churches." What scripture requires you to commune with them at the Lord's table, unless they follow Christ? Does not Jesus say, that except a man forsake father and mother, and all other relatives and possessions, when necessary to obedience to Him, he cannot be His disciple. This argument against strict communion is the most worldly and irreligious of all we have ever heard offered. It is a direct reference, not

to the will of Christ, but to the feelings of men; and when men favor open communion and oppose strict communion on this ground, it is an appeal, not to the Word of God, but to unsanctified human nature. Strict communion is one of the best possible tests of Christian principle. To do right and adhere to principle, if no other one does the same, or the dearest earthly friends oppose.

8. Open communion is the clearest possible evidence of sectarianism. What is sectarianism? Not contending for the truth, however strenuously, or to build up the church that holds the truth; but it is contending for a practice or a party, because it is ours, and not because it is essential to obedience to God. Persons can unite with any church, with which they can commune at the Lord's table. For two churches, then, to practice open or mixed communion, and still strive to build up separate denominations, is to be guilty of sectarianism, and to be chargeable with all its evils. For two churches to commune together, and still neglect to unite and form one church, is then a sin. We must do all we can, except sacrifice truth, to produce union among Christians. Did Baptists believe about infant sprinkling what almost all admit respecting the immersion of believers, viz.: that it was valid, they would at once give up immersion and practice sprinkling, for the sake of union. With us it is the principle of obedience to God that is involved, and therefore we carry it out by strict communion. Other Churches say that is non-essential, and illustrate it by their open communion. One makes membership in a particular Church a matter of principle, and the other a convenience or taste;—the latter must build one Church instead of another, from mere worldly motives. This is sectarianism, and naturally exists where open communion is practised.

9. All the objections made to close communion grow out of a misapprehension of the design of the ordinance, and what Baptists design to express in their communion. For what purpose is the communion? Jesus said, "*As oft as ye do this do it in remembrance of me.*" The apostle declares that by this we "*show forth the Lord's death till he come.*"

1. The Lord's supper then is in commemoration of his death.

2. But who is to show forth the Lord's death in this ordinance? Is it a private, a social, or a public act? It is never observed in the closet, or in the family, but always as a public act of the Church. Hence, communion is shewing forth the Lord's death, *in a Church capacity*; and should be observed only by the Members of the Church. What is done in a Church capacity can be properly done by none but the Church. Whatever is done in a Church capacity is an act of *Church* fellowship, but not an expression of individual *christian* fellowship.

3. Communion is never, in any Church, or by any communicant, designed to be an expression of the fellowship of all present as Christians. A communicant may often not know, by sight or name, five members in a Church of five hundred, where he has just become a member, and is at the communion. Were this ordinance designed to be an expression of christian fellowship, it would be long before this new member could properly partake. Indeed, many might never be able to do it.

In receiving a person into the Church, we judge of his piety, but at the Lord's table we are passing no judgment upon the christianity of any; but, as a Church, are commemorating the Lord's death. Hence, the charge against Baptists, that they condemn others in their communion is untrue. The persistent declaration of open communionists, that Baptists in their communion express doubt of the piety of others, is a false accusation. If, as we have seen, communion is not an expression of christian fellowship, then withholding the communion is not a denial of such fellowship. In strict communion, therefore, we do not say, we are more holy than others, because it is no part of the design of the ordinance, to make any such comparison. As this act, in a Church capacity, is an expression of Church fellowship, withholding the communion is refusing Church fellowship. When we do not go to the communion with others, we do not say we do not fellowship them as Christians; but we do say emphatically, that we do not fellowship their manner of building up Churches. No man can commune with a Church, without practically saying he fellowships the order, ordinances and discipline of that Church. To communicate with any Pedo-Baptist Church,

therefore, is a most solemn practical fellowship of infant sprinkling. With a Presbyterian Church it is a fellowship of Presbyterianism, and with an Episcopal Church it involves fellowship of Episcopacy. Open communion Baptists do not design such fellowship, but they express it, and this is the only reason why Pedo-Baptist Churches desire it. They find fault with our strict communion, only because it is a continued reproof of their manner of building up Churches. Hence, to be consistent, let no man commune with a Church where he could not unite in membership. And one who could unite with any Pedo-Baptist Church is not a suitable candidate for a Baptist Church, unless to be instructed in the way of the Lord more perfectly.

10. The Communion in the Baptist Church is the most open in the world. The spirit it involves is more truly Catholic than in any other christian Church. That is the most open communion in which the largest number of christians can participate, without violation of conscience. That communion is the closest that puts up the greatest bars to christian fellowship. To come to the Lord's table in the Baptist Church one must be immersed on believing and act accordingly. This the whole christian world fellowships as right. To go to the communion in a Pedo-Baptist Church every true Baptist must sacrifice his entire convictions on Baptism, and fellowship infant sprinkling, which he believes to be wholly wrong. Our communion, then, is so open that the whole christian world may participate without a violation of conscience. The Pedo-Baptist communion is so close as to exclude the largest Church in America, unless they will partake at the sacrifice of their convictions. Who puts up bars to the union and fellowship of christians? Not the Baptists, for they practice only what all believe to be right. It is the Pedo-Baptists who practice what a large body of christians believe to be wrong.

QUESTIONS.

1. Do any suppose that Baptists regard baptism a saving ordinance? They believe that ordinances are not saving, but are the duties and privileges of the saved, Jesus is the only Saviour. Therefore they only baptize those whom they

believe are already saved; that is, believers. Infant baptism grew out of the error that baptism was necessary to salvation. But he who knows it to be his duty to be immersed, and for any cause voluntarily neglects it, thereby shows that he is not in a state of salvation. There is, however, one salvation secured to every one who is regularly immersed on a profession of his faith, that is, he is ever after saved from a fear that he has not been baptized.

2. Why say so much about baptism? It is not essential. When scripture and argument fail to afford any ground for sprinkling, and the Pedo-Baptist minister fails to silence the enquiries of his people, he then usually preaches a sermon to show that "it is not essential." Why then does he preach it and practice it, and urge it upon all? Have not christian men and ministers enough to attend to, in this fallen world, that is important? Did Jesus Christ practice and enjoin a non-essential?

3. Why is it that immersion is usually advocated on purely religiousg rounds, and sprinkling from wholly worldly motives? Baptists never endeavor to show that immersion is preferable, but that it is enjoined, and those who would obey Christ must be immersed. The Pedo-Baptists never urge sprinkling as a duty. That it is essential to obedience. They only say it will do. It is just as well. Opposition to immersion only consists in suggesting difficulties in given cases. One of these practices is matter of direct proof from the bible; and the other of opinions and inferences. Why seek for something just as good as the truth? What motive for practising sprinkling, when all agree that immersion is valid? It must be because it is convenient and more agreeable to the human heart. Sprinkling is adapted more to avoid a cross than to perform a duty.

4. Why do persons in all Churches become troubled about their baptism, and often fear that they have not been baptized, while not one such example can be found in all the Baptist Churches?

5. Why is it that the persons in other Churches, that are most troubled about baptism, are the most pious and godly members they have, and that they are always most troubled in their most holy moments?

6. Why is it that changes to the Baptist Church are

usually a matter of conscience, and after a severe strugle, while changes to other Churches are always matters of convenience, to please friends, to secure patronage, or make their path more easy?

7. Why not be baptized (immersed) and then remain in the Pedo-Baptist Church where one belongs? For what reason should you remain there? From your associations or attachments, education or worldly interests? All these motives are selfish and highly displeasing to God when they stand in the way of duty. They do not sound like Jesus' teachings about parting with a right eye or hand. No motive but a worldly one can induce persons to remain, after baptism, in a Church where they do not baptize, and thus in all subsequent life fellowship and sustain that which they condemned in their baptism. It is one of the greatest inconsistencies for a baptized person to remain in an unbaptized Church. No one dishonors baptism so much as he, who, having acknowledged his convictions by following Christ in immersion, ever after denies them by communing and retaining his membership in a Church that sprinkles.

8. Suppose your salvation depended upon your being baptized according to the example and command of Christ, what would you do? You would be immersed with the least possible delay. Should a fear of being lost exert a greater influence on a christian, than the love of Christ? Christian friends, will you do more from a fear of punishment than from your love for the Saviour? Listen to the words of Jesus—"if ye love me keep my commandments," "ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." How will the neglect of so small a thing that Jesus requires of you, appear at the Judgment.

9. How shall we know the truth in this matter?

Three steps will make any one a Baptist. *Resolve to do all your duty as fast and far as you see. Pray earnestly*, and *read the Bible carefully*, taking it as your only rule. All who adopt these rules come to the same conclusions. Do not neglect this. We are all accountable to God for all we *might* know, as well as for all the good we *can* do.

It must be universally conceded that Baptists are conscientious. In their practice of the ordinances, they are not exposed to temptation from worldly or selfish motives.

They cannot chose immersion because it is easier or more convenient. They cannot act under a fear of being lost if they neglect it, for they only administer it to those who are supposed to be already saved—believers. They cannot be influenced by pride, for most of the Pedo-Baptists either ridicule it, like Mr. Wolff, or thoroughly oppose it. Baptists expose themselves to severe and perpetual censure for their strictness in baptism and communion. Human nature is in them what it is in others. They would much prefer to please others, rather than to incur their censure, if they could do it without displeasing their Saviour. They have the natural love of approbation, but prefer the approval of Christ to that of all the universe beside. They cannot be charged with aiming at securing the largest numbers. Did they desire to spread the broadest net, they would sprinkle, pour, or immerse just according to the caprice or fancy of the candidate, and thus take the ordinance out of the hands of God and submit it to the choice of man, which is very pleasing to human nature. They would extend their Communion to all who might desire it. But, at the cost of censure and misrepresentation, they forsake all else to adhere strictly to what they have no doubt is the Word of God. Now with all these worldly notions against us, it must be admitted that we act with sole reference to the will of the Redeemer. To demonstrate that our professions of strict adherence to the Word of God are according to truth, we present the following *articles* of *faith* on baptism and communion, formed wholly out of the Bible, quoted, chapters and verses, without note or comment:—

BAPTISM.

Acts 2, 38—"Repent ye and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

Acts 8, 36 37—"See! here is water. What doth hinder me to be baptized? If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest."

Acts 8, 12—"When they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."

Mat. 3, 16—"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and lo! the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him."

Romans 6, 4—"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that, like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

Col. 2, 12—"Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

COMMUNION—BREAKING BREAD.

1 Cor. 11, 23 26 28—"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you. That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said take eat, this is my body which is broken for you, this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood, this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in in remembrance of me."

Acts 20, 7—"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples come together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow."

1 Cor. 10, 16—"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

Acts 2, 41 42—"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized, and the same day there were added unto them about 3000 souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

These two articles contain our faith and practice on the two only ordinances Christ has left to His Church. We have never seen them, in any form, so clear and forcible as in this exact language of Scripture. Why cannot all christians subscribe to these and practice them? Then should we be all one. It is replied—we believe your articles, as far as you have gone, but you have not quoted all

the Bible says on the subject. We reply—any one may add any other passages he pleases to these articles, and still we will subscribe to them and practice accordingly, provided only, that no passage be added under the head of baptism and communion that says nothing about them. Any addition that needs human explanation to shew that it sustains any plausible relation to them, would introduce confusion and reduce the whole subject to mere human opinion. This most just principle, applied to all the articles of our evangelical faith, would produce a unity of all true christians in one faith and practice. Will any Pedo-Baptist who reads these pages, undertake to construct an article that shall teach the baptism of infants, sprinkling for baptism, or open communion, on this principle of quoting only the declarations of the Bible? We call upon them to do it, if the Bible contains any such doctrines.

John 13, 17—"*If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.*"

Matt. 5, 19—"*Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments.*"

Luke 16, 10—"*He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful in much, and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.*"